



# SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME

## CASE DEFINITION

### Updated Interim U.S. Case Definition of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

The previous CDC SARS case definition (published April 10, 2003) has been updated to clarify the use of the term "close contact" in CDC's definition. Close contact refers to contact with a person known to be a suspect SARS case.

#### Suspected Case:

Respiratory illness of unknown etiology with onset since February 1, 2003, and the following criteria:

- ♦ Measured temperature greater than 100.4° F (greater than 38° C) AND
- ♦ One or more clinical findings of respiratory illness (e.g. cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, hypoxia, or radiographic findings of either pneumonia or acute respiratory distress syndrome) AND
- ♦ Travel† within 10 days of onset of symptoms to an area with documented or suspected community transmission of SARS (see list below; excludes areas with secondary cases limited to healthcare workers or direct household contacts) OR  
Close contact\* within 10 days of onset of symptoms with a person known to be a suspect SARS case.

†**Travel** includes transit in an airport in an area with documented or suspected community transmission of SARS

\* **Close contact** is defined as having cared for, having lived with, or having direct contact with respiratory secretions and/or body fluids of a patient known to be suspect SARS case.

**Areas with documented or suspected community transmission of SARS:** Peoples' Republic of China (i.e., mainland China and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region); Hanoi, Vietnam; and Singapore

**Note:** Suspect cases with either radiographic evidence of pneumonia or respiratory distress syndrome; or evidence of unexplained respiratory distress syndrome by autopsy are designated "probable" cases by the WHO case definition.

For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars) or call the CDC public response hotline at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Español), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY)

April 16, 2003

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